

Dr. Alfred Paige House  
Main Street  
Bethel  
Windsor County  
Vermont

HABS No. VT-40

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VT  
14-BETH,  
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PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction  
143 South Third Street  
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

## DR. ALFRED PAIGE HOUSE

Street Address: Main Street, Bethel, Windsor County, Vermont  
Present Owner: Mrs. Mary S. Branliere, Bethel, Vermont  
Present Occupant: Owner  
Present Use: Residence  
Brief Statement of Significance: Well-preserved town house, reflecting the continuous ownership of one family through four generations.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: Built and originally owned by Dr. Alfred Paige. In the family through daughters; to Augustus Pingy Hunton; to William Brunswick Curry Stickney; to present owner.
2. Date of erection: 1833 - inscribed on door knocker.
3. Architect, builder, suppliers, etc.:  
Architect: Alfred Paige  
Master builder: Lucius Paige
4. Original plans, construction, etc.: Unknown.
5. Notes on alterations and additions: There have been no major alterations. All the owners have contributed to the maintenance and furnishing of the house. The original wrought-iron hardware, which was used throughout most of the house except the entrances, was replaced c. 1880 with brass hardware brought in from Boston. In the second floor northeast bedroom, there is a notable cast-iron stove, which does not date from the time of the building of the house. This stove is ornamented with Gothic motifs, made in Troy, New York, patented 1851. The original barn and outbuildings, which stood south of the house, do not survive. A garage has been built into one ground-floor storage room of the ell where it projects south of the house.
6. References: Fred G. Cox, The Illustrated Historical Souvenir of Bethel Vermont, Bethel, Vermont, 1895, p. 28. Old Buildings Project of The Robert Hull Fleming Museum at the University of Vermont, 1837-1938. Mrs. Mary S. Branliere, Bethel, Vermont.

- B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure: The various owners have all been prominent people locally. Dr. Alfred Paige, Yale graduate, was one of the early doctors in Bethel. Augustus Pingy Hunton and William Brunswick Curry Stickney were both lawyers. Most of the rather large private libraries of these men survive in the house.

Prepared by Osmund R. Overby  
November 1959

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This house contains an unusual central stair hall, high ceilings, fireplaces, and cast-iron stoves.
2. Condition of fabric: Excellent condition, reflecting the careful maintenance of four generations.

### B. Technical Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: One-and-a-half stories, plus cellar. Front masonry block, approximately 35' x 40'. Ell along rear and extending out one side, approximately 20' x 70'.
2. Foundations: Cut granite foundations.
3. Wall construction: Brick masonry front - common bond throughout. Timber frame ell with clapboards. Red brick, very thin mortar joints.
4. Porches, stoops, bulkheads, etc.: Large, massive, three-step, cut granite entrance stoops, front and side entrances.
5. Chimneys: Five chimneys.
6. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: Two main entrances - east (front) and south sides. Six panel doors (two top panels lighted) with blind side lights and three centered arch fan lights.
  - b. Windows and shutters: Six light over six light double hung windows with combination fixed and movable slat shutters.

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7. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: Gable roof, gable end to the street (east). Asphalt shingles. In the gable - a 1/2 round, shuttered fan light at the peak and a 1/4 round, shuttered fan light in each corner.
- b. Cornice, eaves: Boxed, moulded eaves.
- c. Dormers, cupolas: Three dormers on front, brick portion of house lighting second floor bedrooms.

C. Technical Description of Interiors:

1. Floor plans: Central hall type with hall oriented toward the side entrance, with two chimneys in the front masonry wall. Bedrooms on second floor. Large open two-story entrance hall with straight stairway and unusual groined vaulted ceiling to accommodate the roof line as it comes down to one-story height at the entrance wall, where the vaulted form bears on two Tuscan order, decorative columns.
2. Wall and ceiling finish: Plastered, papered. Some batten stripping ornament on the ceilings.
3. Doorways and doors: Six-panel doors.
4. Trim: Moulded wood trim.
5. Hardware: Brass hardware throughout, most of which was installed c. 1880 to replace the original wrought-iron and which was brought in from Boston. Original brass hardware on entrance doors, with brass knocker on side door inscribed with date of building and name of builder.
6. Lighting: Electric lighting.
7. Heating: Central heating with two soapstone fireplaces on the first floor and stoves on the second floor. One cast-iron stove in a plain, severe style dates from the building of the house and was made by R. and J. Wainwright, Middlebury, Vermont. A second cast-iron stove, ornamented with Gothic motifs, was made in Troy, New York, patented in 1851.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The house faces east on a very wide, shallow lot. There are gardens to either side of the house, which is bounded closely on the front by Highway (Route 107) and on the back by a railroad and a river.

2. Enclosures: Enclosed by wire fence - modern.
3. Outbuildings: Attached garage in ell. Original barns and sheds do not survive.
4. Walks, driveways, etc.: Gravel driveway. Slate garden walks.
5. Landscaping, gardens, etc.: Semi-formal arrangement of lawns, trees, shrubs, and flowers.

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